

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 23 No. 6

June 15, 1955

Whole No. 273

THE GENTLEMAN'S JOURNAL

by A. W. Lawson



Cover of the First Issue of the Gentleman's Journal, November 1, 1869.

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by A. W. Lawson

The Gentleman's Journal, a magazine devoted to Literature, Information & Amusement, saw the light on the 1st of November 1869 and the first number consisted of 16 pages, with a colored plate and four extra pages, all for one penny.

It was the same size as Frank Leslie's Weekly and was in every way a well produced boys' journal, illustrated by first class artists and printed on good quality white paper. In other words there was nothing cheap in its production.

It was published by E. Harrison of London, who also published The Young Ladies Journal, Black Bess and Blueskin, a mixed group if there ever was one.

It started off well with a flourish of trumpets and some advertising and attained a fair circulation, although at this date it is impossible to say with what success.

If good exciting tales were of any use in boosting the circulation then this paper had the "goods". In the first number three serials started, namely: "The Raven and What Became of it", "Saxilby Manor" and "The Sea Kings" An Historical Romance of the time of Alfred. The first one was a long tale of the Adventures of several boys in a balloon over Europe and the last was, as its

title indicates, a sea tale.

The first Volume consisted of 35 numbers and the second 28 numbers. In the first volume no less than 20 large Chromo-Lithographic pictures were given away and nine Recreation Supplements.

The two most noted Writers in the first volume were Watts Phillips (of the Royal Academy) who wrote "Facing the World" and Manville Fenn who wrote "Gold" a tale of hunting for gold in Mexico. Both were exciting tales. To show the style of the serials I will append a few more titles: Mark Single—a Sea Story, Townshend the Runner or The King's Favourite, Behind the Mask or The Gypsy's Hate, "Dick O'the Diamond" or "Out on the World", Zarco the Corsair by Charles Stevens, whose specialty was early Historical tales. "Luke's Luck" by one of the Emmett Brothers, Edwin J. Brett's great rivals. "Top-Gallant Tom or The Cruise of the Dreadnought" was another good Sea yarn. In Number 99 commences three serials "Heir to Half a Million", "The White Indian" a tale of Redskin Life and "Paul Adair" or "The Prince of the Pearl Divers" by Charles Stevens. Unfortunately very few Author's names were given.

The first volume contained articles on Science, art, and practical Mechanics. Lessons in Chess, Draughts, Billiards, Solitaire, Angling, Rowing, Croquet; the keeping of Domestic

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Published Monthly at

821 Vermont Street, Lawrence, Kansas

Edited by

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Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Lawrence, Kansas

Price \$2.00 per year

Ad Rates — 6c per word. \$1.00 per inch, quarter page \$2.25, half page \$3.00 and Full Page \$5.00. — 4 times for the price of three.

Ads should be submitted by the 15th of the month in order to assure publication in the following month's issue.

Pets; in addition to Essays, Poetry, Music, etc.

Yet with all these advantages the paper came to a sudden death in Volume 6, which only ran six numbers, when the paper finished, number 150 of Vol. 6 being the last number.

The fault of the paper was it was too highbrow for the boys of that period who wanted more Pirate yarns with more gore and less of the "uplift" business. In fact they were not going to have uplift at any price and they dropped the paper and the consequence being the Publishers stopped publication very suddenly in the middle of a volume. And thus ended a well conducted and well printed paper for boys. There are no copies about and none in the British Museum. I am glad to say I have a complete set from the library of the late Collector, A. E. Waite.

LONG STORIES IN MY COLLECTION

by W. M. Burns

In my little collection of story papers, dime novels and English journals and "bloods", there are a few extra long stories that some of you might be interested in hearing about.

First is the old weekly penny parts of "The Wandering Jew" by Eugene Sue. Published in 1848 in book form by G. Vickers, 3 Catherine Street, Strand, London. It originally appeared in 70 weekly penny issues and at the end of the tale, was published in book form by Vickers. This tale ran to 553 double column pages and has over 100 quaint wood cuts and full page plates. It ran to 181 chapters. Truly an interesting item to collectors of the real old time items.

Another Eugene Sue item that I have is "Martin the Foundling, or, Memoirs of a Valet de Chambre." Published in 1847 by Vickers. Ran to 332 double column pages and 41 weekly parts and 108 chapters. This one has 41 half page wood cuts, but no full page plates. A fine old time tale.

My longest tale of all is The Ho-

garth House one shilling novel that ran to 3 volumes to complete the story. I refer to that famous tale, "The Blue Dwarf" by Percy B. St. John. It ran to 434 double column pages and 195 chapters. It contained 36 full pages and 195 chapters. It contained 36 full page wood cuts and 18 large folding colored plates that measure 10 x 16 inches when opened up. This tale is published in two editions, one with, and one without the large folding colored plates. Either edition is hard to get together. I was over two years in getting together the 3 volumes without the colored plates. Eventually my good friend Arget Harris of So. Wales, England, obtained and shipped to me the original edition with the colored plates.

I then traded off, or sold outright, my set that was minus the colored plates.

Have not as yet read the tale, but from glancing it over a bit, I learn that it is largely a tale with Dick Turpin and Tom King as leading characters. Not true to history, as Turpin and King after numberless chapters of adventures in England as highway-men, emigrate to America and go out West and have several thrilling adventures among the Indians. Then sail for Scotland and meet Rob Roy and have several adventures with him and his band.

Then back to England and still living and prosperous at end of tale. "The Blue Dwarf", being only a secondary character, through the whole tale. Far from following history, it seems to be a fine tale of high adventure and romance.

Now, "Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere", was first published in England and was written by E. Harcourt Burrage, so I have been told. I do not know how many times it was published or in what format in England.

Over here it appeared first in Frank Touseys Boys of New York #444 and ended in #527. Once again Tousey re-printed it starting it in Boys of New York #991, and as Boys of New York only ran to #1000, the

story was continued on in its successor Happy Days. Ending in Happy Days #57 for a total run of 173 chapters.

I have the tale complete in this latter run.

Then in 1899 Tousey again reprinted the tale in a colored cover nickel novel, which ran to 16 weeks to complete the tale. Unfortunately I have only one copy of this rare colored-cover novel and cannot state as to how many chapters it ran to.

In 1902 Norman L. Munro started again reprinting the tale in his Golden Hours. It ran to 80 issues in Golden Hours for a total of 176 chapters. I have it complete in this format also, the 80 issues being bound in two huge volumes. So you see, I have complete the grand old tale in two different formats.

Incidentally, Tousey used the "stock name" of "Gaston Garne" as author, while Munro used the "stock name" of "Samuel Ellis".

My next long story is in my volumes of Young Men of Great Britain. One is titled, "Jack, the Standard Bearer; or, When We Helped the Gallant Turks". No author's name given. It started in Vol. 22 under date of Mar. 11, 1878 and ended in Vol. 24 under date of Feb. 24, 1879. A total of 180 chapters.

A sequel to this fine tale later appeared in Young Men of Great Britain titled, "Three Dashing Hussars; or, Where Glory Leads the Way." But only 62 chapters.

Another long tale in my Young Men of Great Britain is "Ned Nimble Amongst the Mormons." (Note in title the word "amongst" instead of "among".) This tale had a run of 109 chapters. No authors name given, but believed by the late Frank Jay and the late Barry Ono to have been Bracebridge Hemynge. I heartily agree with them. As it was published in 1880 long after Hemynge had returned to England and resumed writing for Brett. It is one of the seven "Ned Nimble" tales that were published in Young Men of Great Britain over a period of years.

Now I am going to mention a long

tale that to the best of my knowledge never was reprinted elsewhere.

This tale appeared in Frank Leslie's Boys of America and was titled, "Dick Lighthouse; or, The Scapegrace Among the Redskins." It started in the July 1875 issue and ended in the September 1876 issue, for a run of 88 chapters.

This tale possibly may have also appeared in Leslie's Boys and Girls Weekly. I have no data on the latter paper, so cannot say for sure; but I do know that it was never reprinted elsewhere here in America.

It was possibly reprinted in some English boys' journal, but if so, I never heard of it. But this could be true as my knowledge of old English boys' journals is very, very limited.

So right now I wish to appeal to all my many friends in America and to my few friends in England, to answer this question if they can: Was "Dick Lighthouse, or The Scapegrace Among the Redskins" ever reprinted?

It was one of the many tales that Hemynge wrote for Leslie after Leslie had "stolen" Hemynge from Brett for a few brief years.

SEXTON BLAKE

By W. O. G. Lofts

In the latter part of 1893, an elderly man sat down and wrote a new detective story for the new Halmsworth's paper which had not long appeared entitled "Halfpenny Marvel". Little did he know that the adventures of the detective would still be written about in 1955; some 62 years later! Such is the fame of SEXTON BLAKE detective, undoubtedly the greatest detective ever created for the Juvenile public in Great Britain.

The first story appeared in No. 6 of the "Halfpenny Marvel" dated December 20, 1893. It was written by a man named Hal Meredith, a Nom-de-plume of Harry Blyth, who was writing quite a few stories for the Juvenile public at that time. Whether he did invent the name Sexton Blake,

one will never know, it has been said that he originally gave Blake the name of Frank; but the Editor of the paper thought the name not lurid enough, and gave him the name of Sexton instead. The story was entitled "The Missing Millionaire" very crude no doubt to readers of Blake stories today, but nevertheless interesting to read. He was linked with a character called Jules Gervaise, a French Detective, which was a popular thing in those days. He lived at that time at New Inn Chambers, and not at Baker St. as at present. Harry Blyth sold the copyright of the Detective to the publishers at, I expect, a very small fee, and died a few years later. Blake appeared in future issues of the "Marvel", a paper which featured Jack, Sam, and Pete, and many famous characters in those days; then when the ~~four~~ penny "Union Jack" started in 1904, he was in it nearly every week, until the Amalgamated Press (This was what the firm was now called) decided that the paper should be devoted entirely to Blake. And so it was until the "Union Jack" ceased in 1933, and was replaced by a new paper called "Detective Weekly"; even then Blake was to be found in its pages quite often. Blake also appeared in many of the other A. P. publications from time to time, papers such as "Dreadnought", "Boys Realm", "Penny Pictorial", "Boys Friend" and "Boys Herald" etc.

It was really due to the huge success of Blake in the "Union Jack" that in 1915 it was decided to start the Sexton Blake Library, the first number appeared in September and was written by a Canadian named G. H. Teed. Its title was "The Yellow Tiger", 120 pages of reading for 3d. This story is considered by many readers of Old Time Blakes to be the finest ever written. Four issues were published each month, later increasing to five, then reverting back to four again. The first series ran to 382 issues until 1925, when it was decided to start a new series. For this new number One it was again G. H. Teed who wrote the story; this was entitled "The Secret of the Coconut

Groves". This series ran right up to the outbreak of World War II with a total of 744 issues. Whilst many of the popular papers running in England had to close down at that period, owing to the shortage of paper, the Sexton Blake Library still continued with yet another new series this time with only two issues appearing each month. For this third No. 1 the story was written by a man whom I know very well indeed, John Hunter, a most prolific writer of Boys stories. The title was "Raiders Past" a most suitable title for those early days of the war. Today the Sexton Blake Library has gone well past 300 issues and although it is not so popular as it was in the past, it holds its own as far as circulation figures go. Its price is 9d and one only gets 120 pages with the two monthly issues put together. A most remarkable feature about the Editorship of the Library is that its same Editor today is the one who produced the first ever Library in 1915, a most brilliant record, and one to be proud of.

What of Sexton Blake himself? Many are the descriptions given of him by the 120 odd authors who have written his adventures since 1893. He is generally described as tall, lean, pale features, and with thinning hair. Very similar to the great Sherlock Holmes, who also had his home in Baker Street, London. Blake, of course, was copied from Conan Doyle's immortal detective and has been described as the office boy's Sherlock Holmes. Blake's early life has been shrouded in mystery. His father was supposed to have been Berkely Blake, a famous doctor of Harley Street, this no doubt is where Blake inherited his brilliant brain for medical research. Blake was educated at both Oxford and Cambridge, is also a famous at all sorts of sports; in his time he has done more feats of endurance than any other fictional character. He is, of course, unmarried, but one author once did mention that he had a wife, way back in the "Union Jack" in 1901, but no mention was ever made of her again by any author. Perhaps it was not a good policy to

have a wife for Blake.

In the early days of his adventures Blake had several assistants, namely, We-WEE (A Chinese boy) Griff; a sort of half-beast boy, and a man named Wallace Lorrimore. Who all did not last very long.

It was in 1904 that Blake's most famous assistant arrived; his name was just Tinker. Where he came from several authors give different versions; all agree, however, that he was a waif or a boy of the streets. He has remained with Blake through the years, with a love for his master that is like Father and Son. I must not fail to mention the third member of the team, Pedro. Blake's faithful bloodhound, he first appeared in "Union Jack" No. 100 (Penny Series) 1905 and came to Blake as a present from a man who had just received very valuable service from the great criminologist. Pedro has disappeared in most of the stories today, due no doubt to the changing of the times.

One may ask, "Have ever any bound books been published on Blake's cases?" The answer is Yes! but not exactly, many bound books have been published by such prolific Blake authors as G. H. Teed, Gwyn Evans, Anthony Parsons, and E. S. Brooks, which were first published in the Sexton Blake Library, but in these bound books the name of Sexton Blake has been altered, and another character, or detective, put in its place; due, no doubt, to the strict hold the A. P. has on the copyright.

Mention must be made of the Sexton Blake Films. Such was the fame of him at the outbreak of the 1914 War, that it was decided to make films of some of his outstanding cases. These unfortunately were very poor efforts, and are best to be forgotten today. One of the last to be made in this country was in 1945, which featured Derek Farrar as Sexton Blake; this is best remembered for the brilliant acting of a 16-year-old girl in a supporting role; this was none other than Jean Simmons, now famous both in this country and America for her splendid performances in films.

Apart from the Sexton Blake Library running today, there is a picture strip of his adventures in the A. P. comic "Knockout", which today youngsters can enjoy the Adventures of Sexton Blake, just as well in Modern Times, as their Grandfathers used to do so at the turn of the century.

FRANK MERRIWELL RETURNS

J. P. Guinon

Since the last Merriwell story was printed 25 or more years ago, Frank Merriwell has made temporary reappearances in a syndicated comic strip, on the radio and in the movies. Now he is back again—this time in a comic book issued bi-monthly by Charlton Comics Group, Charlton Building, Derby, Conn. Single issues are 10c each and subscriptions \$1.20 for 12 numbers.

The first issue, titled "Frank Merriwell at Yale" is scheduled to appear on the newsstands in May. It is a 32-page publication enclosed in a slick-paper cover with an eye-catching illustration of a baseball play at home plate. In size it is about the same as the small-sized Tip Tops used to be, and is filled with excellent drawings in color illustrating three episodes of Frank's early days as a freshman at Yale.

Rattleton and Hodge are shown with Frank, and Harry appears very much as described in the original stories, but the thousands of former followers of the Merriwells who might otherwise be much interested in the new publication will not be happy to find Bart Hodge, Frank's taciturn, black-haired chum, changed to a blonde with shining hair. Just why Bart, one of the most popular Tip Top characters, couldn't be drawn as originally pictured by the author of the Merriwell stories is hard to understand. It is hoped that other disappointing departures from the original stories will not occur in the future issues. It would be pretty rough if Elsie and Doris, for instance, should show up as brunettes.

It will also prove somewhat dis-

appointing to former Merriwell fans that none of the action in the first issue follows any of the original stories, but this may be done in succeeding issues. Frank will have plenty of competition in the comic book field, and it might aid him in his efforts if the original stories, written with that magical Patten touch that zoomed them to tremendous popularity 57 years ago, could be followed closely enough to retain some of their attractiveness, at least, as was done in the Merriwell comic strip that had such a successful run in the early 30's.

Frank will have an edge on Hopalong Cassidy, Dick Tracy, The Lone Ranger and other heroes of today's comic books, as he won't have to confine his activities to one line as they do. For instance, he can switch from college to the Wild West, where his adventures as written for us in the old days were more thrilling than anything Hopalong and his contemporaries get involved in today. Properly handled, this new Merriwell venture could gather a following that would compare with that of any of the present crop of comic book heroes.

QUESTION AND ANSWER COLUMN

Mr. Ralph Adimari writes the following in answer to questions by Hermon Pitcher and Wallace H. Waldrop in the June 1954 and April 1955 issues of the Round-up. "The entire series from No. 1 to the last original number, 644, were written by Cornelius Shea of Staten Island, New York. When I interviewed Mrs. Fischer, daughter of the late and lamented Cornelius Shea, she informed me about this. Not only that, but she had in her possession (1940 or 41) the entire set of Wild West up to the time Young Wild West was in the European War fighting for America and her allies. Shortly thereafter the publishers began reprinting them and Shea was out of a job. I was assured that there were no authors working on the series except Mr. Shea.

"Col. Harvey King Shackelford (1840-1906) created the Fred Farnot stories. S. A. D. Cox took over after he died. I got this information from Mr. Aaron Warford who was part of the Frank Tousey organization to its end in 1928. I interviewed him a couple of times in his office while the Company was being dissolved. It was sold to several interested parties who took over the Mystery Magazine, Moving Picture Stories, etc. The dime or nickel novels were let go. Publisher's Weekly, Vol. 69 March 31, 1906 also calls Shackelford creator of the Fred Farnot stories.

"However, I believe that Frank Merriwell, Jack Harkaway and Jack Lightfoot were superior to Fred Farnot. It seems to me Fred never grew up.

The next issue of the Round-up will contain "Ye Brotherhood, The Round-up and Its Editor" by Charles Duprez.

ALL KINDS

DIME NOVELS
NICKEL NOVELS
STORY PAPERS
BOYS' WEEKLIES
SERIAL PAPERS
BOYS' BOOKS
GOOD USED BOOKS
ENGLISH WEEKLIES
BOUND VOLUMES
PULP MAGAZINES
and lots of other old time
reading matter.

RALPH P. SMITH
Box 985
Lawrence, Mass.

EXCHANGE COLUMN

Wanted; Happy Days #53 to 104 incl. and odd numbers from 200 to 600. Will pay cash or with mint U. S. Commemorate Stamps in singles, blocks or full sheets. Arvid Dahlstedt, P. O. Box 133, Great Barrington, Mass.

Dozens of Alger books for sale or trade. Want Merriwell stories. Have other books and novels for trade or sale. Walter E. Brown, 511 9th St., Altoona, Pa.

How about a bunch of reading matter cheap, some good, fair, small piece torn out of cover, no back cover, lightly mouse chewed, some rubbed on skins a little, etc. Reading and covers all there. For sale—The Yankee Champion by S. Cobb, A Study in Scarlet by Doyle, The Knight of the Golden Chain by Chetude, Was it a Sin by Bremont, Brake up, Through by Daylight by Optic, Trappers From Red River by Texas Pat, Trail of Gold by M. Charles, Vim and Ventures of Bolivar Hametah Alabama doctor by Stevens, His Snapshot Lordship by Lebharr, The Dean and His Daughter by F. C. Phillips, On the Valley of Shadows by D. Dan, John Ploughmaus Talk by Spurgeon, The Three Musketeers, Marguerite De Valais, The 45 Guardsmen, Louise De Lavalliere, all by Dumas, Ethei Dreme by Carey, Hans Anderson's Fairy Stories, Fortune's Footballs by Burgin, Her Son's Wife by H. Wood, A Wicked Girl by Hay, The Mill Street Mystery by Sargeant, Her Own Sister, Midshipman Easy, Virginia Heiress, A Terrible Secret by Fleming, How He Won Her by Southworth, Blind Love by Callius, A Modern Miracle by Fitts, A Choice of Chance by Fairchild, An American Journey by Aveling, Ostler Joe and Other Readings, Lafitte's Lieutenant by Ingraham, Miss Derrick—A Boston Society Girl's Diary by Chester, The Iceberg Patrol, On Battle Practice by Lawton, Buffalo Bill's Trackers by Ingraham, The Harkriders, The Son of the Swordmaker by Read, The Vial of the White Raider by Williams, The Absentee by Edgeworth, I Have Lived and Loved by Forrester, In Spite of Fate by Delmar, A Midnight Mystery by Hume, The Diamond Seeker of Brazil by Lewis, Wolfville by A. H. Lewis, The Wanderings of Ulysses by Witt, How to Make Things Go by Peters, Thrilling Stories of White Slavery by Quale, The Master Criminal, life story of Charles Peace, Ocean Rovers by Thomas, Philip Henson by Hastings, Following a Chance Clew, A Woman of Mystery, The Crown Diamond, A Call on the Phone, On A Million Dollar Trail, The 7 Schemers, The Middle Link, Nick Carter's New Assistant, all by Nick Carter. Flames, A London Phantasy by Dickens, Town Topics and Fetters that Sear by Vynne, The Idle Thoughts of An Idle Fellow and Diary of a Pilgrimage by Jerome, Buffalo Bill's Air Voyage, Jack Harkaways Resolve, J. H. Among the Brigands, J. H. Triumphs, J. H. Friends, Out For Fun by Hemyng, Frank Merriwell's Foes, F. M. Cruise, Dick M. Example, F. M. Down South, F. M. Vacation, F. M. In Europe, F. M. Bicycle Tour, F. M.'s Daring, F. M. in Wall Street, F. M. Jrs Timely Aid, F. M.'s Encouragement, F. M. Lads, F. M. Chums, all by Standish, Little Tu' Penny by Gould, Frank Allen at Rockspur Ranch, F. A. Pitcher by Forbes, The Movie Boys in Peril, The Movie Boys at Seaside Park by Appleton, The Staley Nuggets of Gold by N. Ridley Jr., Taking the Bastile by Dumas, Murder Unlimited, Empire of Crime by N. Carter, Now or Never, The Prisoners of the Cave by Optic, The 8th Wonder, The Gold Gleaners by Cook, On The Pacific by Lawton, A Boy With a Purpose by Franklin, A Confederate Spy by Conrad, Roxy Hastings, The Girl and the Detective, The Mill Street Mystery, Sarah Brown, Mr. Marx Secret, My Opinions and Betsy Babbetts, Around the World in 80 Days

\$.25 each or 10 for \$2.00 or all 105 for \$15.00 p. p.

Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.